

THE CATHOLIC RADICAL

“...to foster a society based on creed instead of greed.” Peter Maurin

August/September 2011

Price: For whatever it's worth.

The Cross and the Sword

by Scott Schaeffer-Duffy

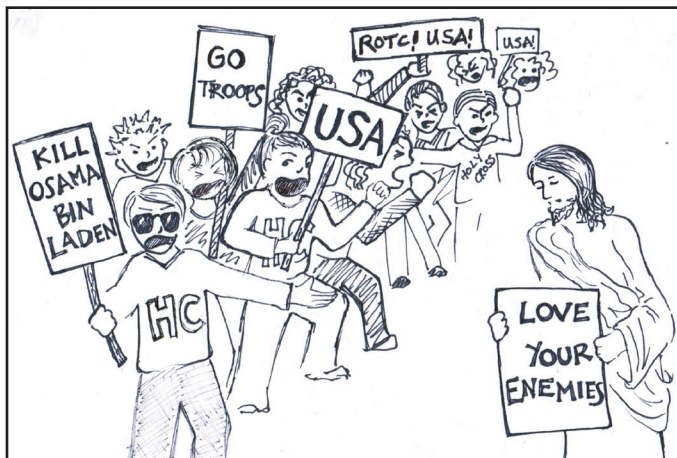
When news of Osama bin Laden's assassination broke, hundreds of students at Worcester's College of the Holy Cross held impromptu, long-lasting rallies. Waving American flags, blowing horns, singing “We are the champions of the world,” and chanting “ROTC,” the crowds converged in the Dinand Library where many climbed on top of tables expressing their patriotic joy. One of the members of the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC), at the front of the crowd, told a reporter for *The Holy Cross Crusader*, “After 10 long years, the death of Osama bin Laden proves that the rule of law still exists and that justice will be done despite the cost in money

and lives and the amount of time it takes.”

The Crusader went on to report that five students from a group called Peace Around the World held a counter-demonstration with a sign which read, “Is this justice?” One of these demonstrators, Antonio Willis-Berry, said afterwards, “We wanted to address whether fighting violence with more violence is truly the right answer, and draw attention to bigger issues.” As it turned out, their presence drew angry, personal insults from the flag-wielding crowd. One of the majority seized the small group's sign, leaving the demonstrators to stand in silence with hands raised in the peace sign. Until 3 A.M., hundreds of students tried to face down the peace protesters by chanting “USA!” or “ROTC!” The rally concluded by counting out loud to 2,752, the number of victims of the 9/11

attacks in New York City, virtually accusing the counter-protesters of amnesia about or culpability in those deaths.

This outpouring of militaristic jingoism at Holy Cross was not unique (students reacted similarly at Harvard and Yale), but shouldn't more be expected at America's second oldest Catholic college? A member



Grace Duffy

of the Holy Cross faculty said that, for today's students, 9/11 is the defining moment of their lives, and that they have grown up on a diet of endless war fueled by an insatiable quest for vengeance. But then again, in 1966, when Clark University students joined the first anti-Vietnam War protest in front of Worcester's City Hall, Holy Cross ROTC cadets held a counter-protest across the street. And when President George W. Bush unleashed his “Shock and Awe” attack on Iraq, Holy Cross students held a “support the troops” rally. When a reporter from *The Worcester Telegram* asked the students' leader, “Isn't the pope against this war?” the spokesperson said, “The Holy Father doesn't have the same quality of intelligence as the President.”

Like John F. Kennedy at his campaign
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Deals with the Devil

by Murphy Davis

Of course you can build that nuclear reactor in northern Japan,” wheedle the experts and technical wizards of General Electric. “An earthquake that size will never come. And even if it does, the containment structure will withstand it. Yes, we're going to build it well and cheaply. We'll get you all that power and save you a few bucks to boot.

“Of course you can drill for crude oil in the deep waters of the Gulf of Mexico (or the pristine land of the Arctic, or...). It will be ever-so-safe. And of course we have all these backup mechanisms and safety features. They're just like angels—if you fall, they will catch you!”

The Devil might come in the form of General Electric Corporation or maybe in the form of British Petroleum, Shell Oil, Chevron [...] or the Pentagon[...]. But they always have the fix. “You think there might be a problem. Well, we thought of that already. Our technology is foolproof. And to every problem presented by our technology, we have an answer provided by our superior technology.”

We have stepped over the line.

The earth is angry. The earth cries out to us: STOP THIS FOOLISHNESS! Cancel this pact with the Devil. It is almost too late. Perhaps it is too late. But never mind, STOP! Now.

We have allowed the Radical Right to continue to “debate” questions like global warming and the dangers of the endless plunder of the earth's resources. As if it were debatable! Our technological wizardry seems to have rendered us deaf, dumb, and stupid. What more do we need to see to know that the earth is dying and in a rage? Every form of storm—hur-
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The Cross

(Continued from Page 1)

speech to Dallas ministers in 1960, these undergrads made it clear that, if a choice came down to church or state, they would unapologetically choose the state. The mob at Holy Cross demonstrated that Catholicism did not moderate their enthusiasm for war. In fact, a recent letter to *The Crusader*, was entitled "ROTC and Holy Cross: a perfect match." Given that the college mascot is a crusader and its seal bears the Roman Emperor Constantine's motto *In hoc signo vinces*, "By this sign [of the cross] you will conquer," maybe the letter writer is right. The military seems quite comfortable at Holy Cross. The college's religious sanction of ROTC makes the transition from civilian to soldier smoother. Certainly, the association of wounded and killed soldiers with saints, martyrs, and Christ Himself is reinforced in campus rhetoric and memorials, especially the one in the college chapel inscribed with the names of graduates killed in war under the words, "To the greater glory of God."

But then there are those five students who asked, "Is this justice?" Where did they find the courage to stand alone? Where did they find the wisdom to question the use of a military hit squad for Osama bin Laden rather than a judge and jury? Perhaps they became familiar with nonviolence in some of their classes or in the Scriptures themselves. After all, the Gospel is still read at Mass and Jesus never celebrates war. Perhaps they read Pope Benedict XVI's book **Jesus of Nazareth: Part II** in which he writes, "killing others in God's name was not Jesus' way." Maybe they were empowered by the pope's words: "The Cross is and remains the sign of 'the Son of Man': ultimately, in the battle against lies and violence, truth and love have no other weapons than the witness of suffering."

The students' peace witness recalled an annual vigil held on the feast of the Triumph of the Holy Cross (September 14) when alumni and friends gather on the steps of the Dinand Library to call for the removal of ROTC from Holy Cross. The vigil lasts but an hour. A leaflet is offered. Signs quoting scripture, saints, and

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RADICAL

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52 Mason Street, Worcester, MA 01610 Telephone: (508) 753-3588, 753-3089

Email: theresecw2@gmail.com

Founded in 1933, The Catholic Worker is a lay movement serving the poor while denouncing injustice and proclaiming peace. We are not tax exempt. We rely entirely on the generosity of our supporters to meet our expenses. We welcome volunteers, letters, poetry, articles, artwork, and donations.

popes are displayed. Several attendees are military veterans. Many have been to war zones as peace activists. Hundreds of students pass by. Some stop to argue, some to listen. It's a small effort, but, like the witness of the five brave students on the night of bin Laden's murder, the anti-ROTC vigil tries to plant seeds of peace. How many will take root is up to God, but it is certain none will mature unless someone scatters them.

Please consider joining us on September 14 at Holy Cross. The vigil falls three days after the tenth anniversary of the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, DC and reminds us how extraordinary Christ is, rejecting vengeance with His words and example, calling us all to love our enemies. This message never loses its power and promise, a nonviolent Holy Cross by which we actually can conquer. Ω

Michael Webster



Michael Webster

Michael Dennis Webster was struck by a hit-and-run driver just before midnight on June 3rd. He died later that night. He was 58 years old.

Michael was a frequent visitor to the Saints Francis & Thérèse Catholic Worker, sometimes asking for food, clothing,

or a blanket, but just as often offering a poem or drawing for our newsletter. He was a drinker who slept on the street too often during his shortened life. He was a drinker and a dreamer. He is missed. We pray that he has reached a safe harbor at long last. Ω

Letter to President Obama

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT,

As you know, on 1st May, 2011, NATO forces tried unsuccessfully to assassinate the Libyan Head of State, Moammer Gadaffi. This attempt to assassinate the Libyan Head of State under US Army law, was a war crime and punishable as an international crime in its own right. During the attack by NATO forces, one of President Gadaffi's sons and three of Gadaffi's grandchildren were killed.

The following day, the extra-judicial killing and assassination of Osama bin Laden and killings of a woman and two men who were with him by US Navy Seals continued the state terrorism of the US Government. After the assassination, you, Mr. President, addressed the media and attempted to assure us that such violence is just and acceptable. Do you and your government and allies who support you, really believe that the vast majority of men and women around the world have lost all sense of what is right and what is wrong? Do you really believe that we have all abandoned all sense of decency and ethical values exchanging them for illegal, killing of unarmed civilians? Do you really believe we will all remain silent whilst under your warrior leadership the US Government and its allies dismantle basic human rights and international laws, so long fought for by brave, courageous men and women (including Americans) replacing these with extrajudicial killings, torture, and assassinations?

Three months into the French, English, Italian-led NATO/US campaign (never sanctioned by US Law) and shamefully agreed to by the UN (which identified the purpose of the operation to be for the protection of citizens!), people of conscience are horrified to hear that, yet again, on 19th June, NATO had carried out more air attacks on Libya, killing 15 unarmed civilians, including women and children.

After 9/11, the whole world shared the grief of the American people, and many hoped that those who carried out such horrendous acts would be brought to justice through the courts. We were moved

by many of the families who lost loved ones on 9/11 when they started Families for a Peaceful Tomorrow and called for justice not revenge. However, violence and revenge was the chosen path of the US Government and its allies, who for ten years embarked on a path of violence and war. At this time, over 6,000 US soldiers have needlessly died and countless thousands have been injured physically and mentally. Wars in Iraq (over one million Iraqis killed) and Afghanistan (over



50,000 Afghans killed) were carried out by the USA in pursuit of vengeance. The US-led so-called 'war on terrorism' in Iraq/Afghanistan/Pakistan has 'terrorized' unarmed civilians by carrying out aerial bombardments, night raids, death squads, extra-judicial killings, and drone attacks killing many unarmed civilians, including women and children. These attacks tragically continue to this day.

In a world struggling to birth a new consciousness, it is incredible that the best the US Government, NATO, and its allies can offer as a model to world citizens is the outdated example of violence, militarism, and war, destroying humans and the environment.

I believe real change and leadership is coming from the people's movements. What is happening around the world amongst the masses of extra-ordinary

men and women rising up, mostly peacefully and non-violently, in country after country for human dignity, equality, freedom and democracy and against violence, oppression, injustice and war, is the real force for change. We all take great hope and inspiration from the 'Arab Spring' and join in solidarity with our courageous Arab brothers and sisters in working for change.

A new dawn, a new age of civilization is coming. It will be an age of solidarity, of each person dedicated to 'protective love' of each other and our world. It will be an age of nonviolent evolution which shows we can solve our problems as the human family by peaceful means, not by violence, nuclear weapons, and war.

The peoples of the world are sending a clear message to you, Mr. President, to NATO, to all our governments, and to armed opposition groups, that there will be no military solutions to ethnic/political/economic problems. Only through ending occupations (USA -Iraq/Afghanistan, Israel/Palestine), declaring cease-fires (Libya, etc.), and entering into dialogue and negotiations with all parties to the conflicts can we begin to solve these problems, the roots of which are inequality and injustice.

Mr. President, you came into Office promising change and gave the world hope. You lit passion in the hearts of many men and women longing for change, for dialogue and negotiation, to move beyond destructive militarism, nuclear weapons, and war. That passion remains in the heart of humanity as can be seen in the mass non-violent movements for social and political change taking place around the world. Will you, Mr. President, take this great opportunity in human history and help lead the world to a new beginning, so we can, in the words of the late President John F. Kennedy, 'begin again the quest for peace'?

Yours in Peace,

Mairead Corrigan Maguire

(Nobel Peace Laureate)

Belfast, Northern Ireland

June 20, 2011

Deals

(Continued from Page 1)

ricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis, tornadoes, winter storms—has grown more drastic and more dangerous to all forms of life. Does anybody really know what time it is? Our “accidents” seem to come out of nowhere when we are least expecting them, but wise counsel has advised again and again that these “accidents” are pretty much a given. Of course cooler heads and doomsayers are easily dismissed, and they surely don’t get the press unless it is to show how ignorant and partisan “they” are.

We allow the corporate elite to blatantly ignore safety regulations and buy off the inspectors. So the mines collapse, condemning the miners to horrible protracted suffering and death. We grieve for the miners and their families, and then we forget about it when the Republican budget proposes eliminating funds for all regulatory and safety agencies.

The Deepwater Horizon oil rig blows and covers the beautiful Gulf of Mexico with crude oil. The frantic and undisciplined (and, shall we add, unregulated?) response poisons the deepest waters with dispersants while the bureaucrats line up to explain how it’s not nearly as bad as it seems. “We’ve got it under control,” they coax. We fret over the pictures of oil-soaked pelicans; but finally we go back to our narrow spheres and complain about the rising cost of gasoline.

We will be shocked and horrified all over again the next time. And now it’s Japan. Disaster upon disaster. Who could have foreseen the tsunami in the wake of the earthquake? Perhaps we could acknowledge that we do not, in fact, know everything about nature. Perhaps we could admit that we do not have it “all under control.” Perhaps we do not have an answer and an antidote for every crisis. Perhaps a bit of awe and reverence might be in order.

Rabbi Abraham Heschel said, “There is only one way to wisdom: awe. Forfeit your sense of awe, let your conceit diminish your ability to revere, and the universe becomes a marketplace for you.[...] The greatest insights happen to us in moments of awe.”

For their lack of reverence in the face of the force of nature and earth’s majestic power, the corporate and government elites are pathetic talking heads: “due to human error... It wouldn’t happen here ... faulty design... Our systems are fail-safe... Have no fear; the radiation will not reach our shores.” They scramble. They cover for each other. They make their excuses as they totter at the edge of the pinnacle of the Temple, daring each other to jump. Assuring one another in their frantic efforts to believe their own hype, that they’ve got it covered.

We recently traveled in south Louisiana to visit our friend in a gruesome op-

more humble response would be to explore how to create employment that enhances and builds up the human community and the earth rather than to cause more and more destruction and endless disaster. [...] The money and resources are available to make good work an option for the workers who formerly risked their lives and health to labor as their agents of death and destruction.

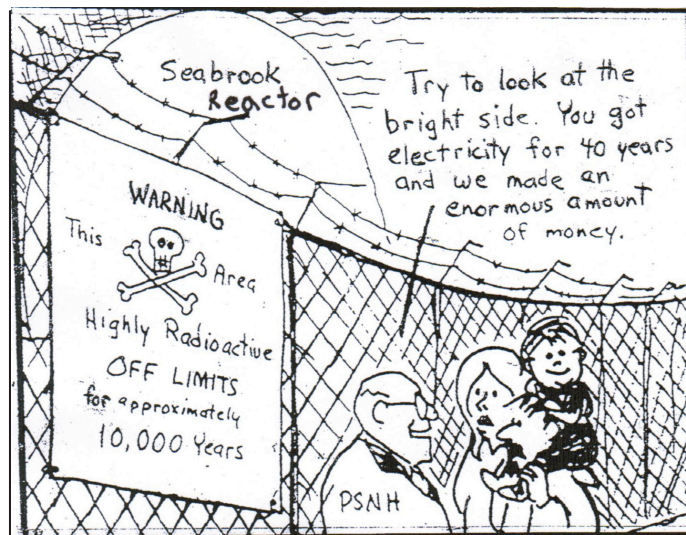
We continue to believe that we can do whatever we want to the earth and it will have zero consequences. Take what the earth has to offer—on land, sea, or sky. “Drill, baby, drill!” screeches the unhinged candidate to the wild exuberance of the Tea Partiers.

But even those of a more reasoned tone insist, in the midst of Japan’s tragic meltdown, that nuclear power is essentially safe and that we shall continue on this path. How many tragedies do we witness—the shooting at Columbine High School, the meltdowns at Chernobyl and Three Mile Island—where The Man stands confidently to the side and assures us, “It could never happen here”?

[...] Nuclear power is part of the “clean energy standard” that Obama outlined in the State of the Union speech

in January. And in the 2011 budget, the administration called for a threefold increase in federal loan guarantees for new nuclear plants, from the \$18.5 billion that Congress has already approved to \$54.5 billion. “We are aggressively pursuing nuclear energy,” said Energy Secretary Steven Chu in February as he unveiled the budget.[...]

We become less, not more human every time we transgress the natural boundaries. And these boundaries must be continually discerned with reverence and humility, especially in the age of advanced technological hubris. Human experience and technology have provided the goodness of medical advances that save and enhance life, as well as the diabolical power to split the atom, plunder the depths of the earth, and potentially destroy everything that lives on the earth. Only the humility



1970s cartoon criticizing The Public Service Company of NH

erated-for-profit prison. I can hardly count the number of times we heard the phrase, from the local folks in the Gulf region, “when we get back to normal.” The ecosystems of our southern coast have been permanently plundered. There is a ruin that is beyond our acknowledgement or admitting. We believe that employment is inextricably linked to our continued plunder of the good earth.

One nice lady complained, “They’ve said we can start drilling again, but no permits have been issued. Don’t they know what they’re doing to us?”

I’m sorry, my friend, but don’t we know what we’re doing to ourselves? Yes, the people of the region are suffering, but our response to that suffering must not be to continue on the disastrous path of plundering the deep waters of the earth.

There is work to do. A reverent and

wrought of wisdom and reverence will show us the way to draw the line and step back from the arrogance that threatens the annihilation of human life and all of God's creation.[...] Ω

Editor's Note: This article was excerpted from the March 2011 issue of Hospitality, the newspaper of the Open Door Community in Atlanta, Georgia.

American nuclear reactors, originally given lifespans of 40 years by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, have been extended 20 years or more. Original valve leakage limits have been increased 20 times. Ten-mile evacuation plans have not been updated while population around US reactors has skyrocketed, while the US government advised Americans to evacuate 50 miles from the Fukushima reactors. Despite a 30-year effort to create one, the US still has no permanent storage facility to contain nuclear waste. Nuclear reactor waste remains dangerously radioactive for at least 24,000 years.

Meanwhile, on May 20, Switzerland called for the decommissioning all five of its nuclear reactors when they reach their lifespan of 50 years. On May 31, Germany announced plans to phase out all its nuclear power plants by 2022. On June 26, Worcester Polytechnic Institute announced that it had shut down its 50-year-old test reactor and was spending \$3 million to get rid of it.

A Most Important Friend

by Claire Schaeffer-Duffy

Robert Talib Douglas, a death row inmate and my good friend died of cancer in the infirmary of Graterford Prison in the early morning hours of May 13th. He was 54 years old.

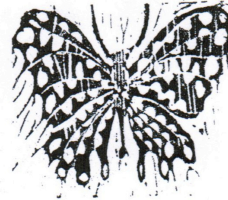
The funeral reception at the Raymond Rosen Community Center felt poor in every sense. There were no photos of Robert, no stories collectively shared. Even the meal was meager. The Center was located less than a block from the site of the murder Robert was accused of committing. I could not tell if the event's barrenness was due to a self-consciousness about honoring a man convicted of killing another, or Robert's long absence from the neighborhood. "He didn't deserve to be on death row for what happened," confided a childhood friend. The enigmatic observation left me wondering about Robert's culpability in a crime that occurred thirty years ago.

That uncertainty did not negate my deep gratitude for Robert, one of my most important friends. His innate goodness and interest in others, especially children, were obvious to the many he befriended.

But his sense of fight is what first drew me to him. Lacking money, a good educa-

tion, and a strong network of support—odds that would have defeated a weaker man—he fought extraordinarily hard for the fair trial he never received. Along the way, he learned much about the legal system and its inequities. His insights on those topics, which he shared with many, were instructive. Reading them, I often wondered what Robert might have accomplished had he not been born in a North Philadelphia ghetto where boys got their heads bashed if they didn't join a gang.

In the end, it was Robert's faith and love that most enriched my life. An observant Muslim, he remained disciplined in thanking and adoring God despite the bleak, unchanging circumstances of his life. When I last saw him in April, he was shockingly gaunt, a skeleton wrapped in brown skin and shackled in a wheelchair. His already large eyes, set in such an emaciated body, looked even bigger. Prison bureaucracy is merciless. Although Robert was obviously dying, we still had to converse in a booth using phones, a thick Plexiglas divider between us. "How are the children?" were his first words to me that day; "I love you," his last. Ω



Rita Corbin

Living in Mercy's Dominion

Editor's Note: The following was excerpted from Owen Parry's historical fiction, Shadows of Glory. Set in 1862, the narrator is an officer in the Union Army, a Methodist teetotaler, trying to unravel a mystery. After being attacked and left for dead, he is nursed back to health by an impoverished family of German farmers.

The lady of the house made a chicken dinner that last night. This was on a weeknight, mind, when so rare a bird was forbidden the family pot. The hen died in my honor. The Kempfs were good souls, teachers of kindness.

What was I to them? Despite my uniform, I might have been a criminal, or



Gustave Doré

otherwise deserving my fate. Yet, I woke up in their own bed. The money had not been taken from my pocket by my attackers, so I offered to pay for my board. Neither man nor wife would hear of it, for they lived in mercy's dominion.

There is true religion, see. I speak not of Christian, Jew or Musselman, of Hindoo or the countless kinds of heathen. For did not Jesus look beyond the name? Tis kindness, not severity, that lets us gain a little peek at Heaven. Now you will say, "This Jones speaks like an infidel. Saved is saved, and damned is damned, and done." But I will tell you: Those who would put harshness in religion are no Christians worthy of the name. Look at that young family, with poverty their neighbor and lifelong work their fate. Were they not better Christians than a prince? I say we must keep true religion from the grip of the old and bitter, and place it in the hands of those who love. Ω

A Lawless Nation

by Patrick O'Neill

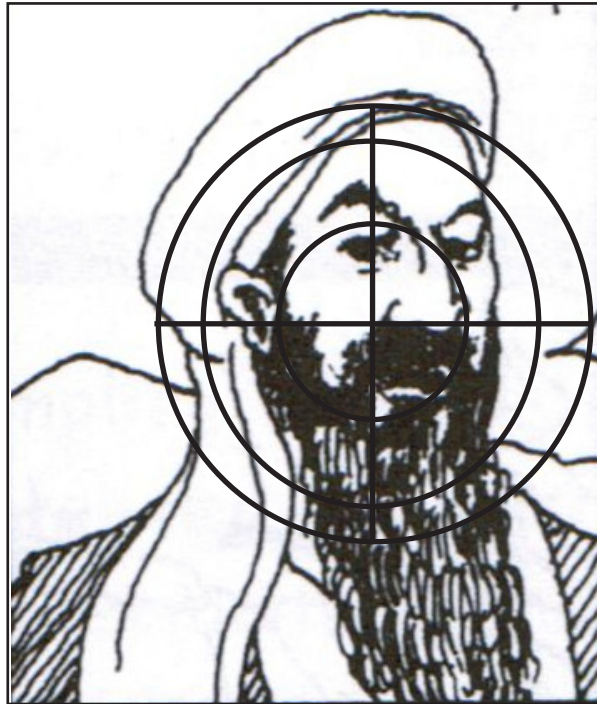
Editor's Note: The author is the co-founder of the Father Charlie Mulholland Catholic Worker community in Garner, North Carolina.

The murder of Osama bin Laden — Oh wait, I should not use that word to describe the pre-meditated killing of the world's most wanted man, who had his head blown off May 1 under the direction of the President of the United States of America, a nation that prides itself in governing by the rule of law. Oh, I forgot, the Constitutional principles that once undergirded US actions have been in abeyance since September 11, 2001.

Under the "new" rules, it's perfectly excusable when my government tells blatant lies (See the *Raleigh News and Observer's* huge May 2 banner headline "Bin Laden killed in firefight" or the report that he used his wife as a shield). So what if a team of assassins woke him up in the middle of the night and executed the unarmed bin Laden in his PJs. After all, public enemy No. 1 deserves whatever he gets. His wife, also unarmed, was shot as well. Was bin Laden shot in the back of the head, execution style? Who knows the truth? His body was conveniently disposed of without autopsy. The only word we have is from those we know to be liars.

The reaction of Americans to bin Laden's killing has been one of the moral low points in our nation's history; it ranks down there with the national jubilation in 1945 following the atomic bombings of Japan. Joy is the word that best describes the general reaction of Americans to the extra judicial murder of a man who allegedly masterminded the 9/11 attacks. Progressive publications are also aligned with the status quo. Locally, *The Independent Weekly* ran a political cartoon showing bin Laden falling through a trap door in Hell with the caption: "Wow! I never knew this place even had a basement!" Media columnist for *The Nation*, Eric

Alterman wrote: "The killing of Osama bin Laden was a just and necessary undertaking." Even clergy have jumped on the joy-killing bandwagon. *News & Observer* syndicated "God Squad" columnist, Rabbi Marc Gellman, wrote of bin Laden's killing, "I'm joyed but not exactly overjoyed." Overjoyed is apparently for



the non-clerical among us. "**Love your enemies**," holds no sway here.

In my daughter Moira's Catholic morality class, killing an unarmed bad guy rather than allowing him his day in court didn't raise any strong objections for teenage Christians or their instructor, Moira reported. The Vatican statement in response to bin Laden's killing was also lacking. Vatican Director of the Holy See Press Office, P. Federico Lombardi, wrote: "Osama bin Laden — as everyone knows — has had the gravest responsibility for spreading hatred and division among people, causing the deaths of countless people, and exploiting religion for this purpose.

"Faced with the death of a man, a Christian never rejoices, but reflects on the serious responsibility of everyone be-

fore God and man, and hopes and pledges that every event is not an opportunity for a further growth of hatred, but of peace."

What gives the Vatican the right "as everyone knows" to make claims about bin Laden being responsible for "causing the deaths of countless people" even though he never faced charges or a trial for his alleged crimes?

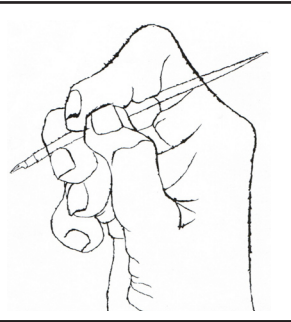
It's easy to prosecute low-profile bad guys under the rule of law, and adhere to the theory in U.S. jurisprudence that justice is blind. But the divide between judicial theory and practice has become meaningless in the aftermath of 9/11. With endless undeclared wars, drone attacks, secret prisons and torture-as-common-practice, it seems US officials no longer even bother to claim that there is any difference between us and the enemies we demonize.

Of course, the US positions itself as above international law anytime we're accused of violating it, which is what we do every time we engage in military attacks in Pakistan, where we sent our assassination team to kill bin Laden. A dangerous and unstable nuclear power, Pakistan may be the most dangerous nation in the world. What anti-American backlash will we face for yet another violation of Pakistan's sovereignty?

Without accountability from her citizens, the United States, which can only be described as a lawless nation, will surely not do the right thing. Why the silence? The intentional, premeditated, murder of bin Laden has diminished our humanity and diminished us as a nation. It has only served to feed our blood lust for revenge, while giving us another reason to form a mob to chant, "USA, USA" in our streets.

Self-righteous and rarely curious, Americans would rather believe that the zealots who carried out the 9/11 attacks hated us for our freedoms than to consider the possibility that much of bin Laden's criticism of US Middle East policy is simply the truth. Ω

Letters



Ben Shahn

Dear Scott,

In the June/July issue of CR it sounds like you had an interesting time in Afghanistan. I don't know what to make of our American role there. It's a hugely corrupt area and we're just fueling it.[...] I'm sick of looking at Karzai and that stupid hat he always wears.

As a Vietnam veteran who was involved in a conflict we never should have entered into, I feel the same way about WWI, the Korean War, and Iraq, I worry about the men/women serving.[...]

One more comment, on Israel. Ev-

everyone has the right to a peaceful existence, but I can't support them until they take down their Berlin Wall and quit forcing the Palestinians off their land to expand their settlements.

Richard M. Douglass
Northampton, MA

Dear Scott,

Great article on your fact-finding trip to Afghanistan. I like how you let them tell it themselves. It's interesting to hear Rahamat, the camp elder, say "The US and the Taliban are the same. Soldiers here or Taliban in our village are like gods. They can do anything they want to do."

Rahamat should be President. The picture of Rahamat's children speaks volumes to me.

Hollis Dunlop's article, "The Inconvenient Truth About Bottled Water" was alarming. I didn't know most of the facts. I'd heard about the garbage patch in the North Pacific, but thought it was the size

of Long Island, not twice the size of Texas! OMG!

I'm with you in your chagrin about the exclusion of women and married men from equality in Christian ministry..

Several people here came to me after Obama's speech talking about Israel. I get them so mad they walk away ready to explode. So, I really appreciated Roger Waters' article "One Less Brick in the Wall." I show it to them and they read it with interest; then they're unusually quiet after that.

I also found [Australian Catholic Worker] Anne Rampa's letter interesting. She wrote: "[...]Our life can feel quite stagnant at times and I wonder what we are achieving living this fringe, alien lifestyle surrounded by people, in our local community, who are, at best, disinterested. The problem is that the depth and meaning in our life is irresistible[...]" I will pray about [that...].

F. Scott Perkins
Indian Town, Florida

Catholic Worker Calendar



Sarah Giaino

"They shall beat their swords into plowshares... and they shall train for war no more"

Inscription under the statue of the Prophet Isaiah behind Holy Cross' Dinand Library.

September 12 & 26—Mass: Join us in prayer and song. 7:30 P.M. 52 Mason Street. Refreshments to follow.

August 5 & September 2—Consistent Life Vigil: Please join our monthly vigil against war and abortion. Noon - 1 P.M., Military Recruiting Station, 255 Park Ave, and Planned Parenthood, 470 Pleasant Street, Worcester.

August 6—Remembering the Atomic Bombings: Please join us in a vigil for nuclear disarmament on the 66th anniversaries of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. 11 A.M.- noon. In front of Worcester's City Hall on Main Street.

August 18 & September 15—Ta'anit Tzedek: Jewish Fast for Gaza Prayer Vigil: Please join us in a Jewish prayer and fast for an end to the Israeli siege on Gaza. Noon-1 P.M. In front of Clark University on Main Street, Worcester.

September 14—Vigil for the Removal of ROTC: Please join alumni and friends on the steps of Holy Cross College's Dinand Library for the annual Triumph of the Holy Cross vigil for the removal of military training. Noon - 1 P.M.

September 21—Report from Afghanistan: Please come hear Ken Hannaford-Ricardi's reflection on his July trip to Afghanistan. 7 P.M. 52 Mason Street. Refreshments to follow.

For more information, call: 508 753-3588 or email theresecw2@gmail.com

Mason Street Musings

Yesterday, we welcomed J., who showed up at the door accompanied by his sister and her husband. After a few overwhelming nights at the city's crowded emergency shelter,—"My stuff got stolen there" he said—J slept on the streets, and then moved in with his sister. She and her husband are also struggling. Having lost their home of thirty years to foreclosure, they now occupy a few rooms in their daughter's house. J was sleeping on the floor and they were feeling cramped.

People are doubling up, moving in with friends and relatives because of evictions, lay-offs, or an inability to pay the rent on wages received. Last week, a working mother begged hospitality for herself, three children, and husband. The family is crammed in and quarrelling at his sister's place. Today, a man called on behalf of his mentally disabled friend, "a humble guy," whom the caller hosted until the landlord said, "Pay for your guest or get out."

The poor are not the only ones feeling pressure. A friend's brother, a former New York stockbroker who once earned \$200,000 annually, is barely surviving on a houseboat off Manhattan. Although he has a chronic condition, he has not seen a doctor because he cannot afford health insurance. "If I die, I die," he says.

Like the economy, the natural world also shudders. Historic wildfires. Feroocious hurricanes. Emanuella, who fled Haiti a week after an earthquake leveled

her home, tells me that in these end times she is trying to keep herself ready for the coming of the Lord. My oldest son hopes the collapse we are enduring concludes before he starts a family.

I, however, am strangely optimistic. The disintegration of confidence in rugged individualism and unbridled capitalism makes room for realizing the nearness of God.

"**The Kingdom of God is now,**" declares the Gospel. I believe this, but I also



Sartah Young

believe we must make the Kingdom. I see its construction happening. Urban gardens are cropping up all around the city. At St. John's Catholic Church, parishioners are renovating a recently-purchased property to house a meal program and clinic for the homeless. In these severe times, to welcome the poor and excluded, and to grow our own food can no longer be considered extracurricular activities, or the mission of idealists. These are essential vocations for all who believe in a generous and compassionate Christ.

Of course, there is uncertainty in this work. Last month, when donations were dribbling in and the bills piling up, I found myself tediously evaluating every decision according to its cost.

But there is also abundance. Step into our squatter's garden, cultivated in a vacant lot, and you will see what economics based on generosity rather than personal security, can yield. Almost everything in the garden—seedlings, cuttings, compost—was donated. Now it bulges with produce and flowers.

Visit the house at supper time and you might get a glimpse of the wealth that comes from a life shared with others. No one receives a cent for the time spent at the table, but during our hour together the uncertainty and isolation that are so much a part of poverty lessen. We realize we are not alone. God really does dwell among us.

So come and visit. Please continue to support us. Donations are typically lean during summer and early fall, even though bills still come. Many thanks to all who have remembered us. You keep us going.

In August, we bid farewell to volunteer Beth Caillouet and our high school intern Jessica Latta. Every Monday, Beth, accompanied by her dog Stringer, has joined us for supper, washed the dishes, and been cheerfully attentive to all. She leaves for a job in Virginia. Jessica returns to high school. We will miss them both. Ω

Blessed autumn.

Claire

SS. Francis & Thérèse Catholic Worker
52 Mason Street
Worcester, MA 01610
(508) 753-3588 & (508) 753-3089

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